Module Specification

Dissertation Project in Physiotherapy

Version: 2028-29, v1.0, Approved

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Part 1: Information

Module title: Dissertation Project in Physiotherapy

Module code: UZYYW4-30-3

Level: Level 6

For implementation from: 2028-29

UWE credit rating: 30

ECTS credit rating: 15

College: College of Health, Science & Society

School: CHSS School of Health and Social Wellbeing

Partner institutions: None

Field: Allied Health Professions

Module type: Module

Pre-requisites: None

Excluded combinations: None

Co-requisites: None

Continuing professional development: No

Professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements: None

Part 2: Description

Overview: As a graduate and health professional, being able to develop, plan, deliver and report on a systematic investigation is an important attribute to address real world problems and challenges. This module provides learners with an opportunity to work within a team to develop a research proposal and then undertake the research project. Learners will also undertake independent study that will allow them to experience the process of academic inquiry, all the way through to dissemination. It will contribute to their development as an evidence-based

practitioner and their appreciation of the use of inquiry to support innovation and creativity within their profession.

Features: Not applicable

Educational aims: This module aims to provide learners with an opportunity to undertake a research project that is within the scope of their profession, as part of a research team. They will build on research skills developed at Level 5, enabling learners to design, plan, and conduct a research project with increased independence and critical insight
With the support of a supervisor and the module leader, learners will develop the skills and knowledge to communicate their research.
The module aims to prepare learners to be an evidenced-based physiotherapist who can contribute to the development of the profession.

Outline syllabus: The syllabus will typically include:

Building on learners' prior learning from the Level 5 research module.

Developing a deeper understanding of appropriate methodologies relevant to the chosen topic area.

Examining the strengths and limitations of selected research methodologies.

Exploring ethical and governance requirements associated with research and inquiry.

Introducing key principles of project management in the context of research.

Engaging with a range of project types, which may include:

Primary research

Systematic literature reviews

Scoping reviews

Secondary data analysis

Evaluation research

Service improvement projects

Working in research teams to support best practice aligned with the selected methodology.

Completing an individual summative assessment.

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: In this module, the emphasis is on experiential learning and learners will be supported by a supervisor. Contact with supervisors may occur in person or virtually. Learners will be expected to engage in supervisor-directed and independent study. Lectures and seminars will be provided for key topics and a range of learning resources will be provided through relevant virtual learning platforms. Peer learning will be encouraged and supported through tutor groups. Study time will be distributed between self-directed reading, digital learning, supervisory meetings, project work and preparation of the assessment.

Module Learning outcomes: On successful completion of this module students will achieve the following learning outcomes.

MO1 Critically evaluate the current evidence relevant to a chosen question/topic related to their profession.

MO2 Construct a research project demonstrating an appropriate selection of research methodologies and a critical understanding of the chosen approach.

MO3 Appraise and reflect on the research process and application to inform future practice.

Hours to be allocated: 300

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 270 hours

Face-to-face learning = 30 hours

Reading list: The reading list for this module can be accessed at readinglists.uwe.ac.uk via the following link https://rl.talis.com/3/uwe/lists/A273532D-F68E-BC6D-8942-25B913008772.html?lang=en-GB&login=1

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: Summative assessment task: Written report and viva

The summative assessment for this module is a 15-minute (maximum) viva and a written dissertation report. The viva questioning and responses will be informed by a dissertation of 4,000 words maximum, presented in an established and agreed-upon project report format. The report format will be agreed with the project supervisor/module leader prior to commencement of the project. Learners will receive feedback and a grade for the written dissertation and viva in combination, rather than as separate components.

Rationale

The combined use of a written dissertation and viva provides an authentic and rigorous assessment of learners' research capability. The written project report reflects established academic and professional conventions for disseminating research, enabling learners to present their work in a format suitable for publication, service evaluation, or future academic progression. It requires critical appraisal of relevant evidence, clear justification of methodological choices, robust analysis, and consideration of implications for physiotherapy practice. Completion of the written report prepares learners for their viva and offers the option to submit their work for publication if desired.

The viva builds on the written submission by allowing learners to articulate, defend, and reflect on their research decisions in real time, demonstrating personal

ownership and deep understanding of their project. This mirrors the demands of multidisciplinary team discussions, research governance panels, and conference presentations, where clinicians and researchers must justify their approach and respond to complex questioning.

The viva ensures that learners' individual insight, reasoning, and decision-making are directly evaluated. While the written report may be supported by digital or generative AI-enabled tools, the viva mitigates risks associated with external assistance and upholds the integrity of the assessment process. Additionally, the viva fosters authentic professional skills, enhancing communication, critical thinking, and confidence in defending research. These skills are highly valued in clinical practice, leadership roles, and essential for those pursuing further academic or professional awards.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment will occur at several points throughout the process. Project ideas may be provided by learners, staff or practice partners and a project proforma will be completed prior to commencement of the project and reviewed by an independent supervisor or module leader. Project proposals, prepared by learners to plan their work and/or for ethical approvals, will be reviewed by their supervisor and a scrutiny panel member. Although not marked, proposals will be linked to QAA banding and learners will be provided with feedback. Proposals will have to be resubmitted if indicated to be less than a QAA pass (40%), or if they have not sufficiently addressed ethical considerations. Learners will not be able to begin data collection until their proposal has passed.

Assessment tasks:

Project (First Sit)
Description: 4000 word report
Viva exam informed by the submission of a 4000 word report
Weighting: 100 %
Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No
Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3

Project (Resit)
Description: 4000 word report
Viva exam informed by the submission of a 4000 word report
Weighting: 100 %
Final assessment: Yes
Group work: No
Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy [Glenside] BSc (Hons) 2026-27